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ABSTRACT

Part of a series of home literacy readers with conversational text and sketches, this booklet addresses water safety in the Alaskan summer environment. Alaskan villages are generally located near slough, creek, lake or ocean. At the end of winter, the ice floes go out, and where there was snow there is water. Summer activities include use of boats, gill nets, dip nets, fish wheels, fish knives, racks, smoke houses, etc. Most families have a small motor boat used for travel, hunting, recreation, and fishing. Children learn safe boating by example. Although the Arctic night is light, the fish are running, and Alaskans could stay busy all night, good safety procedures require a good night's sleep prior to boating. Boaters must be alert enough to face sandbars, logs, eddies, sweepers, and water so cold that in early summer a person can stay alive in this water only 15 to 20 minutes. Even swimmers with lifejackets can become over-chilled and die of hypothermia. Storms should be waited out and boats tied securely. Boats should have the correct motor size and low, even loads, including both packs and/or people. Boaters should always carry sufficient tools, fire extinguishers, lines, paddles, anchors, bailers, flashlights, first aid kits, and personal flotation devices for each passenger. Fingers and hair should be kept out of the kickers by engine cowling (non-heating covers). Boaters should recognize that fuel explosions and drug abuse while boating can be fatal. (SC)

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The Rivers Run Down to the Sea

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Safety for Small Boats

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The Rivers Run Down to the Sea

Safety for Small Boats

by
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1978

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Alaska Area Native Health Service
Office of Environmental Health
Environmental Health Services
Anchorage, Alaska

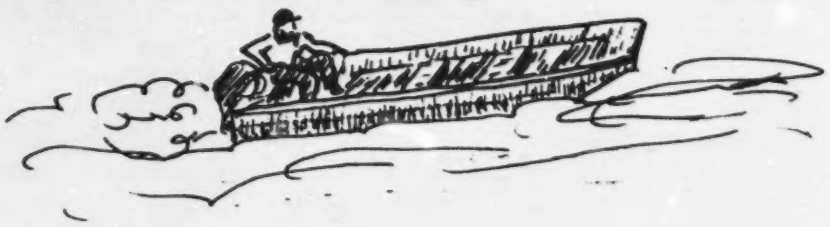
Almost every Alaskan village is near **water.**

Rivers Oceans Sloughs
Ponds
Creeks Lakes Lagoons

A lot of Alaska is **water** in the summer!

In summer, **boats** are a way of life.
Almost every family has a boat...
...for fishing, for hunting, for travel,
or just for fun!

There are many kinds of boats.
Most people in the villages have small boats.



This book is about **safety** in small boats.
With any small boat there is **danger!**
Things can go **wrong.**
Accidents can happen!
And accidents are most often caused by people...
...careless people!

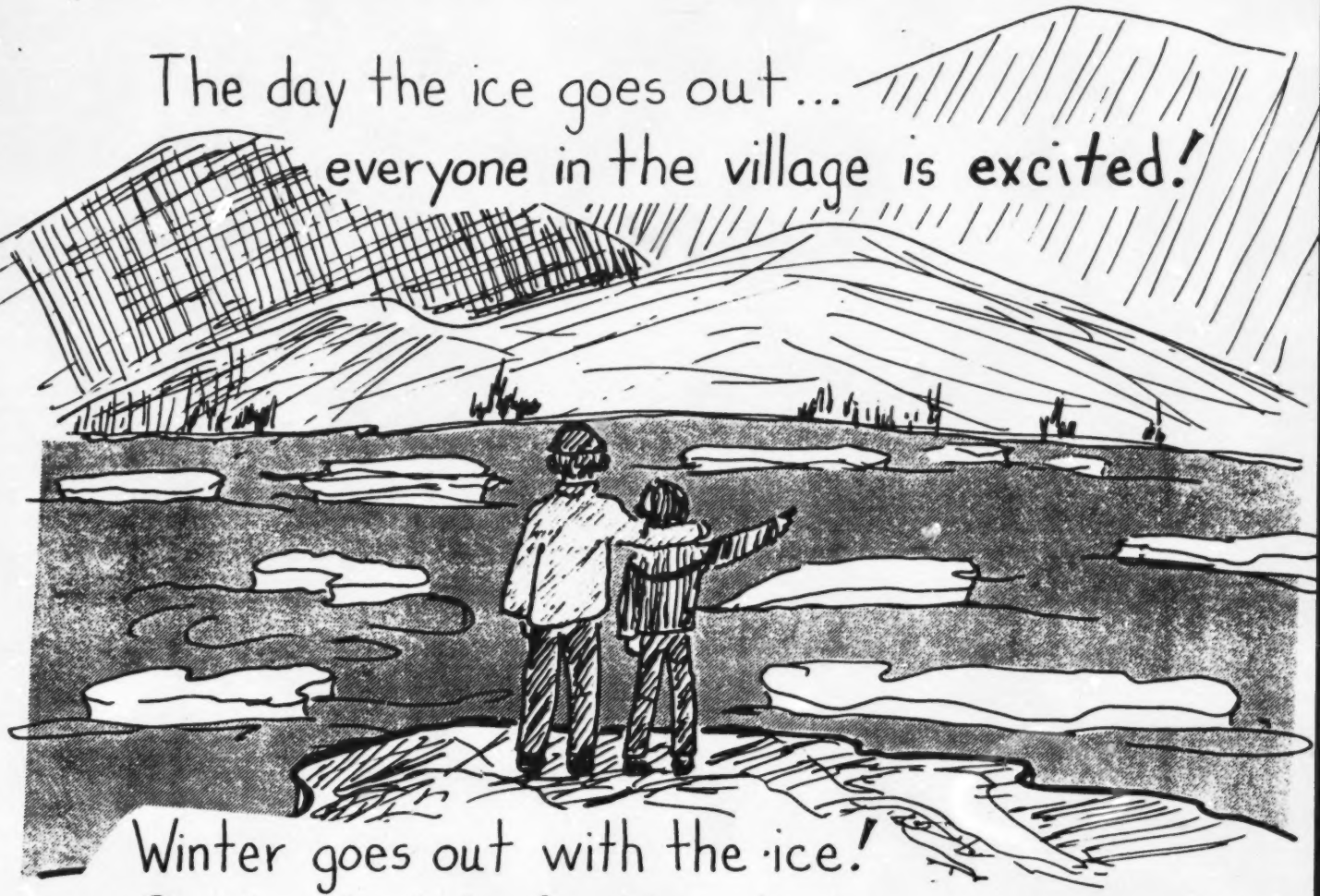
There are many things to **know** about
boating safety!

But more important...

...there are many things to **do** about
boating safety!

Safe boating is everyone's job!

The day the ice goes out...
everyone in the village is **excited!**



Winter goes out with the ice!
People start to fix their kickers,
scrape, paint and caulk their boats,
and get out their fish nets.
Fish wheels, gill nets and dip nets are fixed.
Fish knives are sharpened.

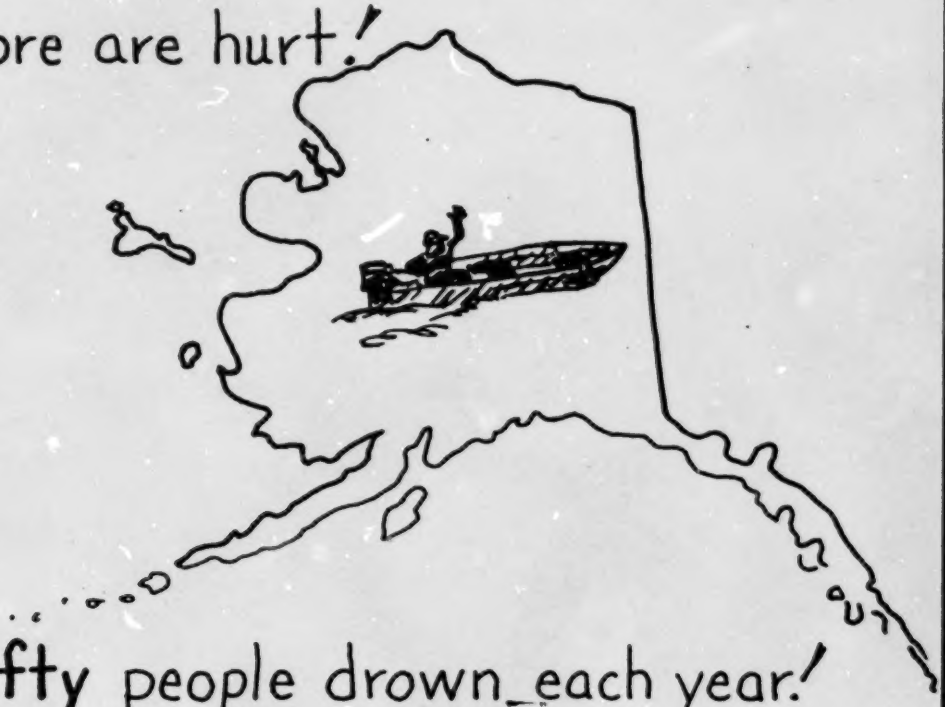
Racks are built.
Smoke houses in the village are cleaned.
People get ready to go to fish camp.

Everyone is *busy, busy, busy!*

Summer means fish in Alaska...
Summer means trips to other villages.
Summer means work in boats ...
...and fun in boats.

And summer means **death** in boats ...
...for some!

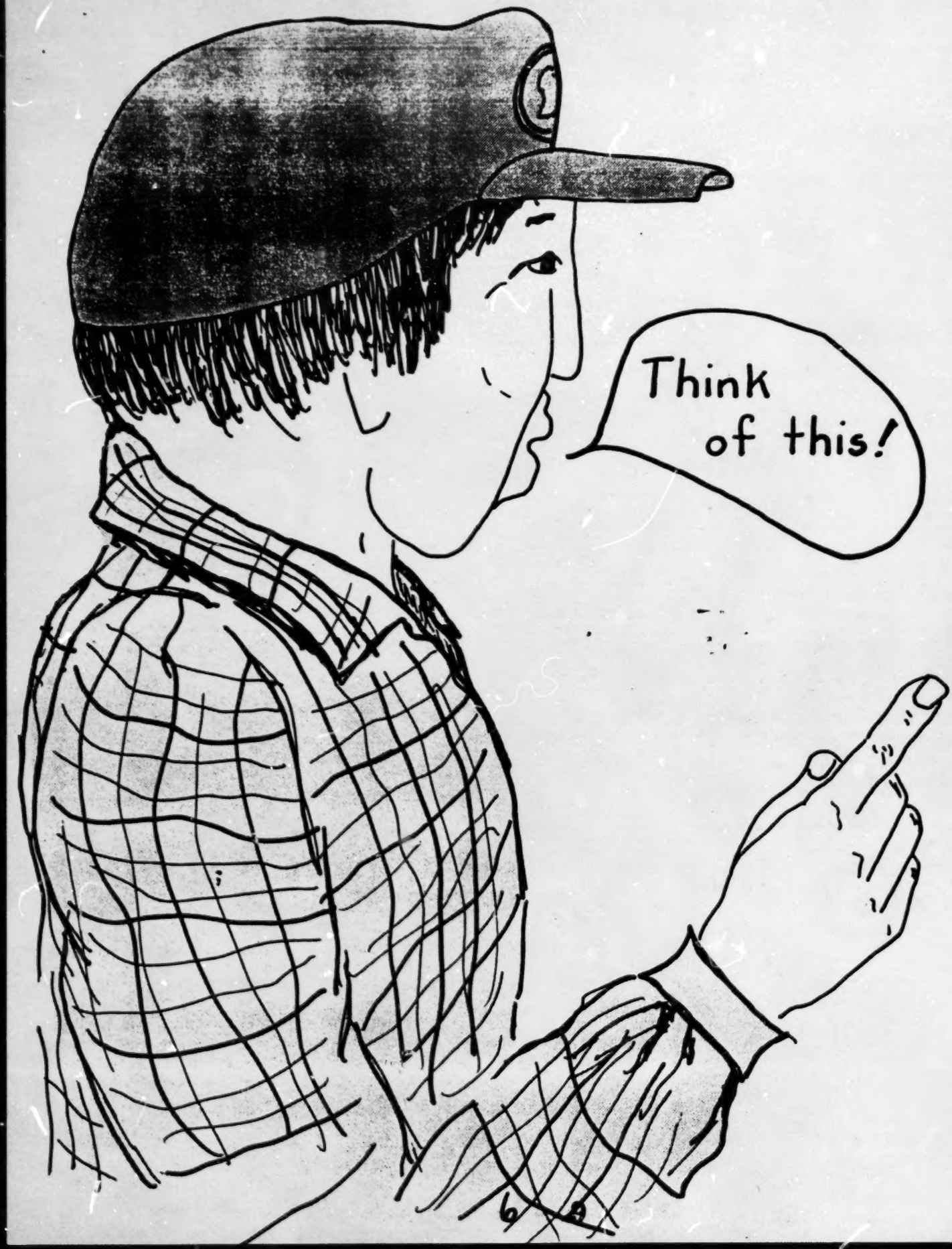
Each year in Alaska many people **die**...
...from accidents on the water.
Many more are hurt!



Thirty to **fifty** people drown each year!
No one knows how many **almost** drown.
People fall out of boats.
People get wet and cold
and **die** from hypothermia.
Boats float away leaving people stranded.
People **die** in fire and explosions of fuel.
People try to run boats when they are **drunk**.

If you don't follow safe boating rules...

Boats can kill!


Think of this!

In **Alaska** ...

rivers are **strong** and **swift** and **cold!**

And often it is a **long**, **long** way...

from one place to another.

There are hidden sand bars,

sweepers,

eddies and

high, overhanging cut banks.

The **lakes** are as big as oceans.

Storms can come up **fast!**

Alaskan water is **cold!**

In early summer, a person can stay alive...

in the water only *15 to 20* minutes!

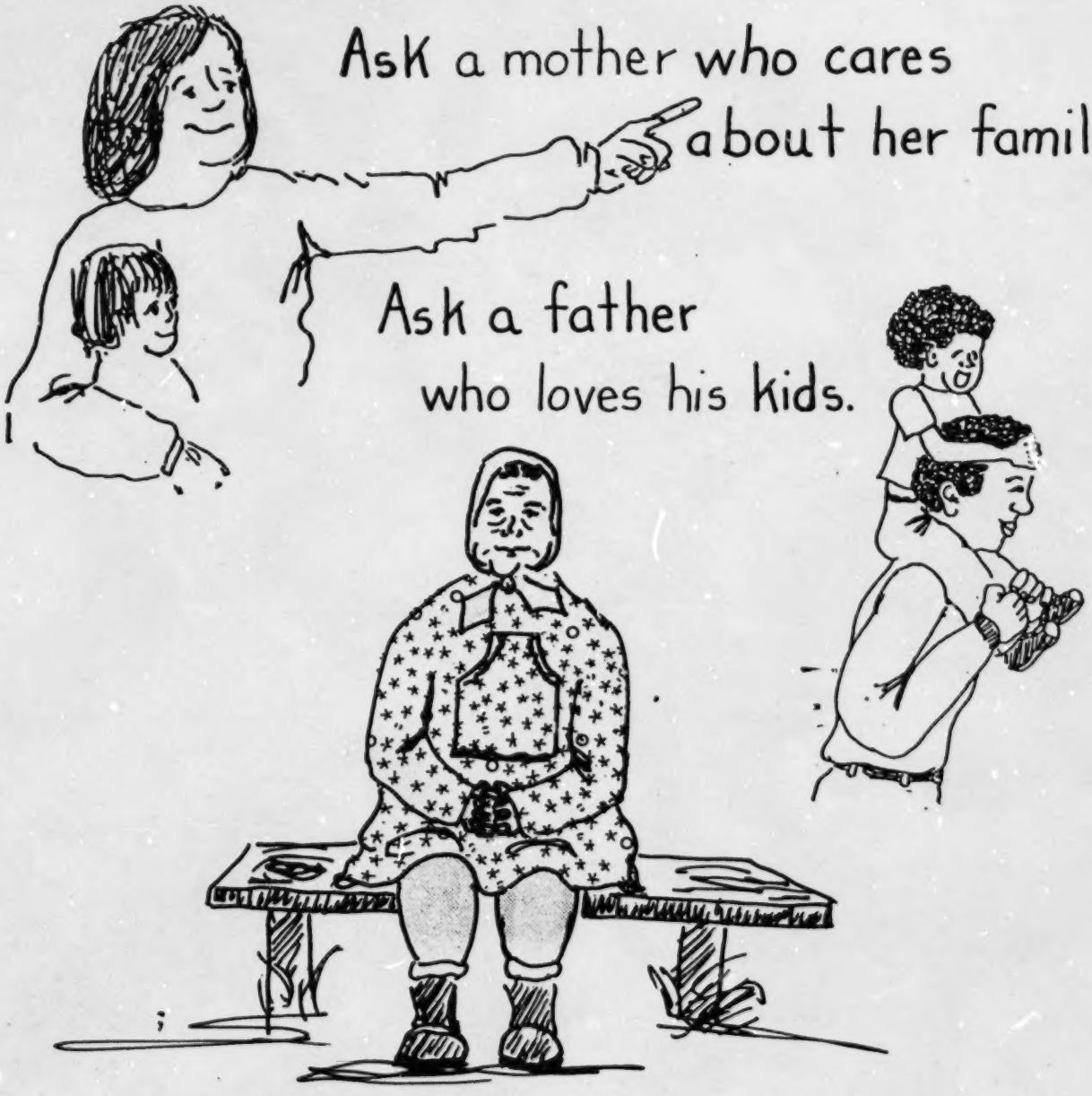
A person in the water can **die** from the cold...

...even with a life jacket on,

before he or she can be rescued!

Boating in Alaska can be very dangerous!

How can boats be safe?



Ask a mother who cares about her family.

Ask a father who loves his kids.

Ask an old woman who has seen a lot of life ...and death.

They know you have to follow...
safe boating rules.

Rules for Safe Boating

Find out if each person can swim!

A person should be able to ~

1. Jump into deep water and **swim** 15 yards.
2. Then, **without touching bottom**, turn and swim back.
3. Halfway back, roll over and **float** ~ for 30 seconds.
4. Then, do all of this **with clothes on!**

Even if a person <u>can</u> pass this test...

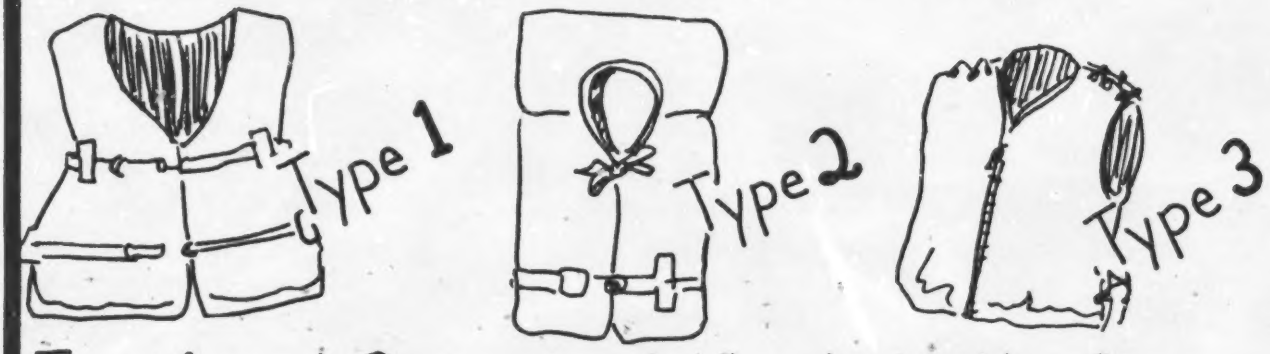
...he or she should wear a life jacket...

at <u>all</u> times

when in a boat or around water.

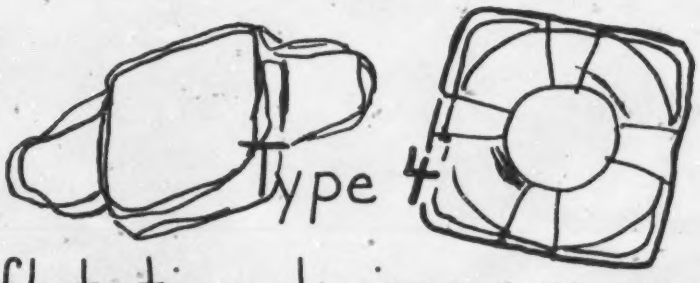
Make sure you have a **PFD** (lifejacket).
for every person in the boat.

PFDs
(Personal Flotation Devices)



Type **1** and **2** are made to hold the face...
...of an **unconscious** person **out** of the **water**
Type **3** will hold a **conscious** person up.
But if the person is **knocked out**,
Type **3** will **not** hold his or her face up.

Make sure the PFD's are the right size!



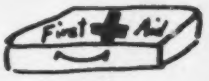
Type **4** flotation devices are made...
to be **thrown** to a person in the water.
They are **not** made to be worn!

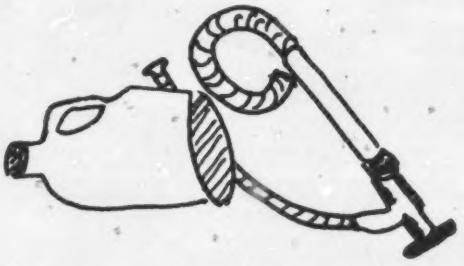
Have these things in the boat...
...at all times!

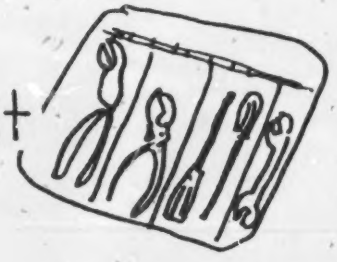
Oars or paddles

Anchor

Extra line

First aid kit 

Bailer 

Tool kit 

Flashlight

Fire extinguisher

PFDs for everyone in the boat!

Get in and out of the boat with care.

Only **one** person **at a time** gets in or out!

Keep **weight low** and in...
...the **center** of the boat.

Hold on to both sides of the boat for **balance**.

People already on the boat...
...should **help** keep the boat **still**.

Get **out** the **same way** as getting **in**.

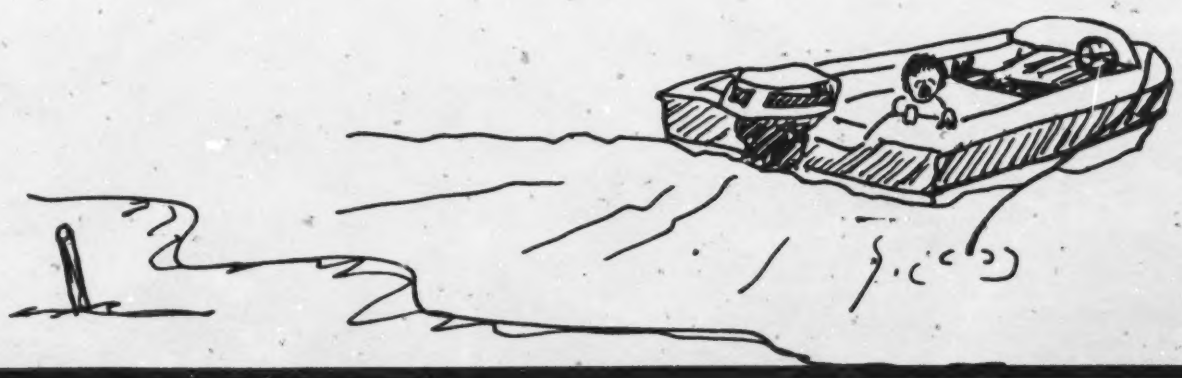
Watch that you **don't pinch** your **fingers**...
between the side of the boat...
and the dock ... **or another boat!**

Be careful while the boat is moving.

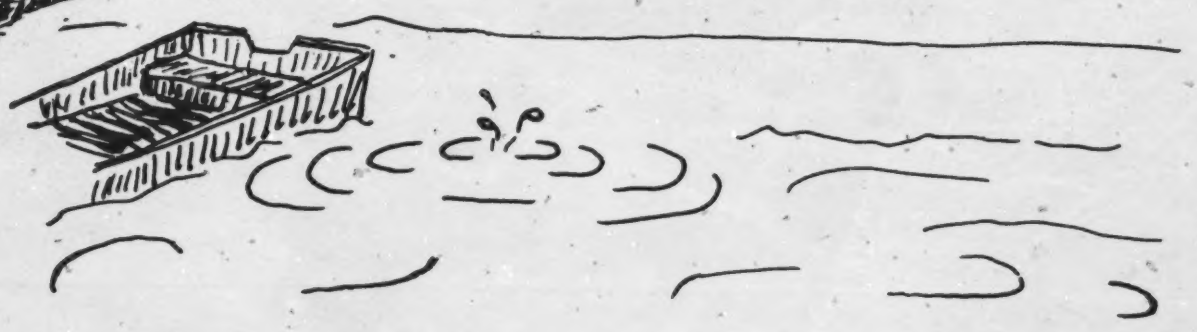
Stay **sitting down.**
Keep arms and legs **in the boat.**
Watch for **swimmers** in the water.
Watch out for **other boats.**
Slow down for turns.
Watch out for floating **logs,**
... **sweepers** and gravel **bars.**
Don't be a show off!

Be careful when the boat is tied up!

Be sure the boat is tied up well...
...so it will not drift away.



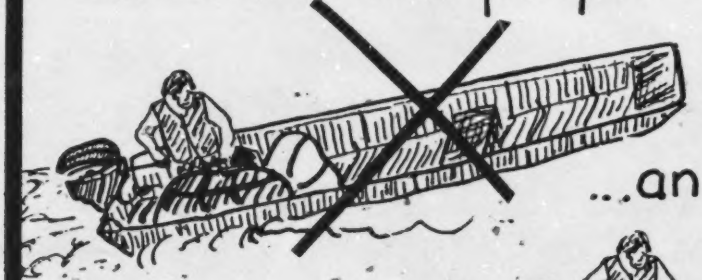
Watch out for little kids!



Don't let kids play on tied up boats!

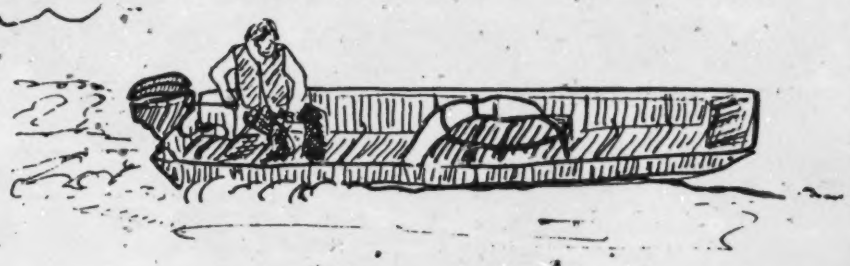
Load the boat with care.

Balance the people or the **load**...



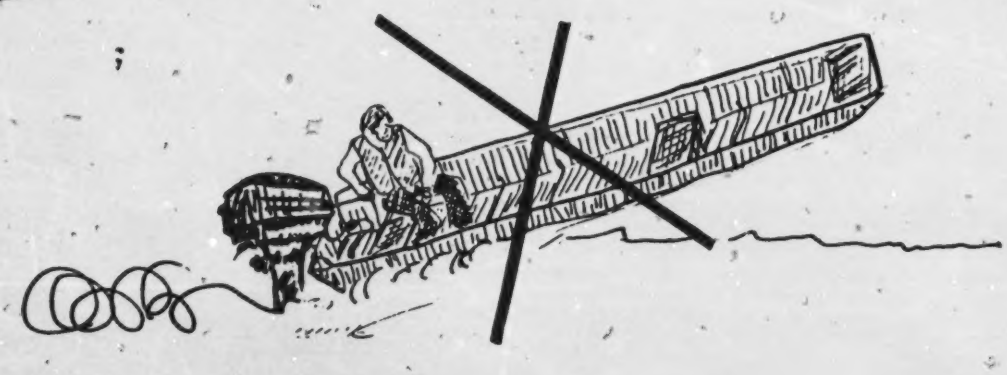
...side to side...

...and front to back.



...so the boat sits **straight** in the water.

Match the motor to the boat size.



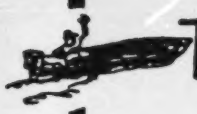
Don't overpower a small boat.

Take good care of the boat and motor.

Read the **book** that comes with the kicker.
Keep the kicker **fixed** and oiled.

Keep the cowling (engine cover)...
on the **motor!**

Running the engine without the cowling...
...**does not** make the engine run cooler!
People have been badly hurt
getting their fingers,
or their clothes,
or their hair,
caught in an uncovered kicker!



Tell someone where you are going.

If you go boating alone ... or...
...if you go on a long trip...
Tell someone where ...:
... and how long you will be gone.

Always start out with plenty of gas...
...and spare parts!

Be careful gassing up!

Open fires or lighted cigarettes near gasoline...
...can cause **explosions** and **fires!**

Be sure the gas tank and hose don't **leak**.

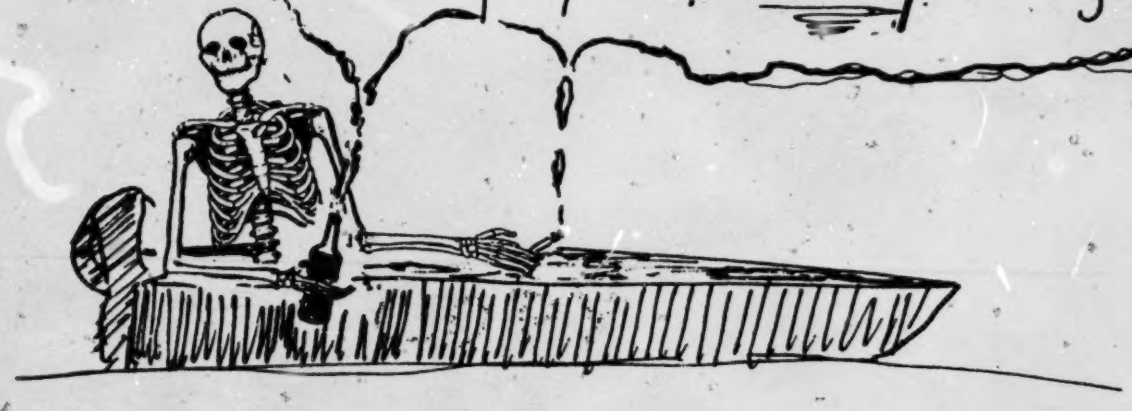
Wipe up spills in the bottom of the boat.

Don't take a boat out when you are...
drinking!

Don't take a boat out when you are...
taking **dope!**

Booze and **dope**
make people do **foolish** things!

Booze and **dope**
make people do **deadly** things!



So many boating accidents...
so many drownings...
so many deaths are caused by~
drugs or drinking!

Don't go boating when you are over-tired!

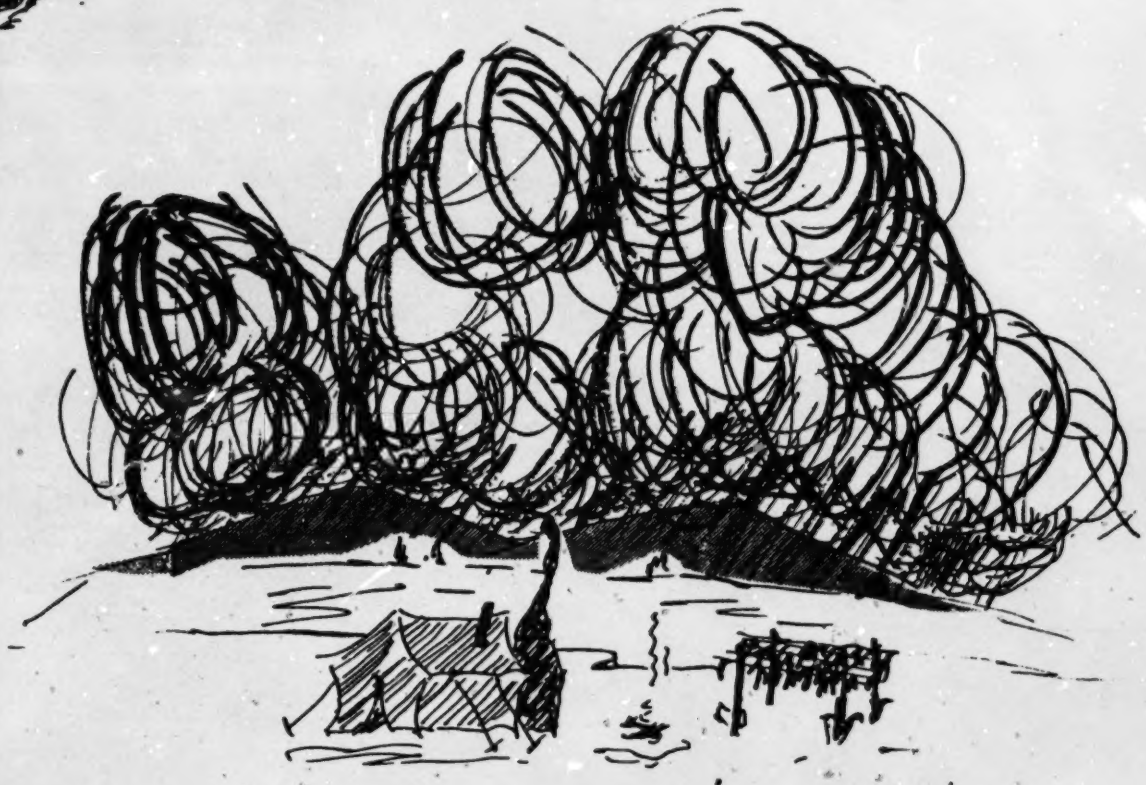
In summer Alaska is `light´ all the time.
This sometimes makes people **forget** to **sleep**!

When the fish are running,
people stay up day and night.

They get too tired!

If you feel tired ~
go to bed and **rest**...
... even though it is `**light**´ all night...
...even though the fish are running!

Watch out for storms!



If you know a **storm** is coming...
...**stay off the water!**

If you get caught out in a storm...
...**go in quickly!**

If you can't get home...
...**tie up to a bank and wait it out!**

Try to stay warm and dry.

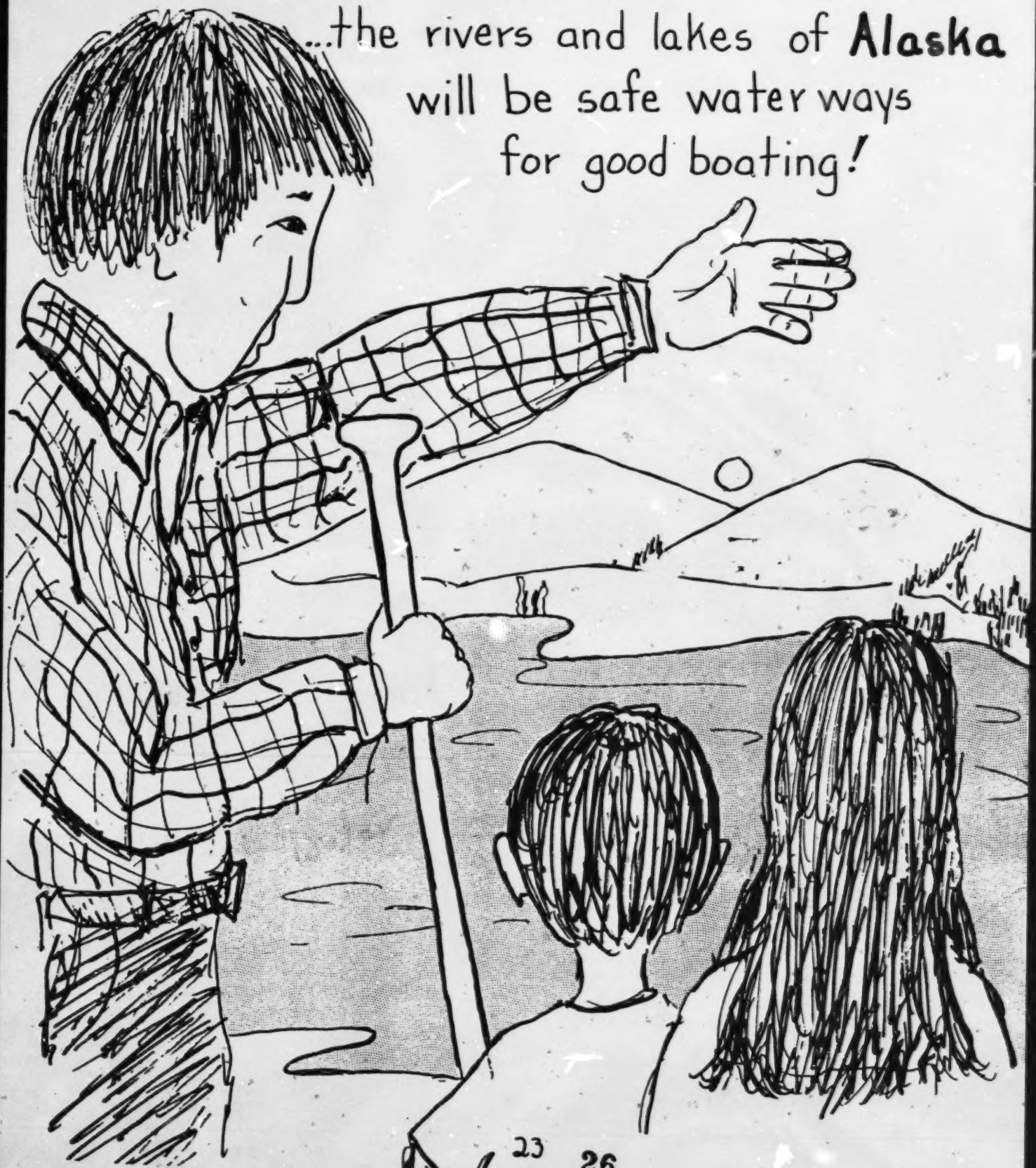
Children learn by watching.

If parents **practice** safe boating...
their kids will learn by what they see!

If grown-ups **follow safe boating rules...**
kids will follow their lead!

If you practice safe boating rules...

...the rivers and lakes of **Alaska** will be safe water ways for good boating!



Safe boating is everyone's job!